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MIDDLE AMERICA-CARIBBEAN DIVISION

Directorate of Intelligence
Central Intelligence Agency

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CENTRAL AMERICAN PEACE PLAN WEEKLY UPDATE

17 September 1987

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CENTRAL AMERICAN PEACE PLAN WEEKLY UPDATE

17 September 1987



Washington, D.C. 20505

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

CENTRAL AMERICAN PEACE PLAN WEEKLY UPDATE

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This weekly Situation Report is prepared by the [redacted] Office of African and Latin American Analysis. This paper was coordinated by the Directorate of Operations. Comments and queries are welcome and may be directed to the Chief, Middle America-Caribbean Division, ALA, on [redacted]

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CENTRAL AMERICAN PEACE PLAN WEEKLY UPDATE
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Democratization

- The Central American Vice Presidents made little headway in their meeting in Tegucigalpa on 11 September to discuss creation of a regional parliament, according to press reports. They agreed to form a 100-member body with headquarters in Guatemala City but must meet again to discuss procedural rules. [REDACTED]
- Two of the three Nicaraguan priests who had been exiled returned to Managua on 12 September. [REDACTED]
- The Sandinistas want a guarantee that the independent newspaper La Prensa will not attack regime policies before they allow it to reopen, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Cease-fire/Amnesty

- Guatemalan guerrillas issued a communique on 3 September offering to talk to the government but refusing to lay down their arms. President Cerezo, saying that discussions could take place under the auspices of the Reconciliation Commission, rejected any preconditions. [REDACTED]
- A Sandinista Directorate member said on 16 September that the regime would declare a unilateral cease-fire and was appealing to rebel field commanders to accept the government's cease-fire and amnesty offers. [REDACTED]
- The Nicaraguan Government is organizing local committees to encourage the insurgents to accept amnesty, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- Nicaraguan President Ortega announced on 13 September that 12 non-Nicaraguans jailed for counterrevolutionary activities would be pardoned. [REDACTED]
- The Nicaraguan insurgent assembly announced on 16 September it had formed a five-member negotiation team to discuss a cease-fire with the Sandinistas. [REDACTED]
- The Nicaraguan insurgents are considering releasing 110 Sandinista prisoners of war to Costa Rican President Arias, [REDACTED] The guerrillas hope the move will generate international pressure on the regime to free insurgent prisoners. [REDACTED]

- Costa Rican President Arias, after meeting with the Salvadoran guerrillas on 14 September for the second time in two weeks, publicly announced that he had made progress in promoting insurgent dialogue with the Salvadoran Government. [redacted] Arias called Salvadoran President Duarte to say that the guerrillas had declared in writing their acceptance of the peace plan--Duarte's precondition for talks. Duarte, however, did not view the rebel statement as sufficiently explicit and announced on 15 September that the deadline for guerrilla acceptance of peace talks had expired. [redacted]

Aid to Insurgents

- Honduran President Azcona [redacted] agrees with the interpretation that his government would not be obligated to dismantle anti-Sandinista camps in Honduras if Nicaragua refuses to negotiate with the insurgents. Foreign Minister Lopez, however, said he believes it would be difficult to adhere to this position. [redacted]
- There are indications of increased resupply activity by the Salvadoran rebels along the southeastern coast across from Nicaragua, [redacted] The Salvadoran military believes that Nicaragua and the FMLN are making a major resupply effort prior to a possible cease-fire. [redacted]

National Reconciliation

- The first meeting of Nicaragua's National Reconciliation Commission on 8 September focused on procedural matters. [redacted] members agreed that decisions will be made by consensus and announced publicly. Alternate members will have a voice but no vote in the commission's sessions, which are scheduled for twice a month. [redacted]
- Nicaraguan President Ortega said on 13 September that the government would begin a dialogue with regime opponents--including insurgents who accept amnesty--in early October. He also announced repeal of a law allowing the government to confiscate property held by exiles. [redacted]
- El Salvador named former President Magana as head of its National Reconciliation Commission and installed the Church representative as its secretary on 12 September. [redacted]
- [redacted] Ruben Zamora, the leader of the largest of two exile political parties allied with the Salvadoran guerrillas, [redacted]

intends to return to El Salvador. The move suggests dissension within guerrilla ranks on how to deal with the peace accord. []

International Verification

- The International Verification Commission--composed of the Foreign Ministers of the Central American and Contadora countries and the UN and OAS Secretaries General--will hold technical meetings on 19-20 September in Managua. []

Other Developments

- The Foreign Ministers of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua informally discussed peace issues on 12 September on the margins of a cultural affairs ceremony in Guatemala. [] Honduras refused to attend because of Nicaragua's World Court suit but plans to participate in all formal meetings on peace matters. []
- The five Central American Foreign Ministers will meet in Managua on 17 and 18 September. They are likely to discuss Salvadoran and Costa Rican proposals to implement the peace accord--first introduced at the technical meeting on 5-6 September. They probably will also discuss verification issues in preparation for the Managua meeting of the International Verification Commission. []

Perspective

Because the Central American democracies do not have a united strategy as they enter this week's meeting of the International Verification Commission, Nicaragua and the Contadora countries may seize the initiative. Salvadoran officials [] want a two-step process, focusing on verification of democratization before discussing how to verify compliance with security commitments. Honduras is likely to endorse this approach because it is particularly sensitive to any attempts to verify that the anti-Sandinista insurgents have vacated Honduran territory before 7 November, when the democratization and cease-fire provisions of the accord take effect. Costa Rica and Guatemala, on the other hand, appear intent on organizing work committees for all verification tasks, []

[] Guatemala will propose that a subcommittee be created in each Central American country consisting of the Ambassadors from Verification Commission member countries. We believe Nicaragua and the Contadora countries will focus on prohibiting aid to guerrilla groups as the premier verification issue. []

None of the democracies, despite the declared intention of some of them to pursue this goal, appears to have given thought on how to promote use of the OAS and minimize the UN role in

verification procedures. The Contadora countries probably will be receptive to using the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to help verify political progress, but some members have already expressed a preference for involving the UN or West European states for security verification. Costa Rica has proposed that the Verification Commission decide which countries must form a National Reconciliation Commission, an idea that could undermine Tegucigalpa's opposition to forming such a body on the grounds that there is no insurgency in Honduras.

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CENTRAL AMERICAN PEACE PLAN
WEEKLY UPDATE
17 SEPTEMBER 1987

PROVISIONS	COMPLIANCE TO DATE	ACTIONS STILL REQUIRED
DEMOCRATIZATION	NICARAGUA has allowed opposition rallies, but prohibits marches without prior approval; Core Four already in substantial compliance.	NICARAGUA must repeal state of emergency, establish press freedom, and permit freedom for political parties by 7 November; Central Americans must prepare draft treaty for a regional Parliament by 7 January.
CEASE-FIRE/ AMNESTY	EL SALVADOR and GUATEMALA will talk with rebels if they accept peace accord; NICARAGUA will talk with US, but not with insurgents.	Governments must issue amnesty decrees and carry out all necessary actions to achieve cease-fire permitted by their constitutions by 7 November.
AID TO INSURGENTS		Central Americans must call for halt of aid to regional insurgents, and prevent use of their territory by insurgents by 7 November.
ARMS CONTROL		Central Americans and Contadora Group to continue negotiating on security issues, including arms limitation, verification, and disarming rebel groups.
NATIONAL RECONCILIATION	NICARAGUA formed National Reconciliation Commission, 25 August; EL SALVADOR, 7 September; and GUATEMALA, 9 September.	Governments must initiate dialogue with all unarmed opposition groups.
INTERNATIONAL VERIFICATION	International Verification Commission formed, 19 August.	Commission must meet to determine compliance by 7 December; Central Americans must provide all means necessary for Commission's work.

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